MORALS AND SOCIALISM

THE ODD TRICK

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MORALS AND SOCIALISM

By Charles H. Kerr

AND

THE ODD TRICK

By Ernest Belfort Bax

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PREFACE.

This booklet is not written for special students of ethics, but for those who are trying to solve every-day moral problems in a practical way. No claim is made to originality and space prevents any attempt to present proofs of the various statements made. For the facts relating to the early development of society from communism to slavery, the reader is referred to Prof. Achille Loria's work entitled "The Economic Foundations of Society." The statistics of the classes in the United States are taken from the Socialist Almanac for 1898. The subject of sexual morality has been omitted from the present booklet, partly because the writer's object here is to suggest general principles of conduct rather than to enter on the endless detail of applying them, partly because his views on that part of the subject are stated in his contribution to the booklet published under the title, "Was It Gracia's Fault?"

The concluding pages under the title "The Odd Trick" are taken from Mr. Bax's admirable book entitled "The Ethics of Socialism."

MORALS AND SOCIALISM.

Probably no words are more freely used, and yet used with less idea of what they really mean, than words expressing moral judgments on people or actions. A is an honorable man, B is shamefully immoral, Mrs. C is one of the best women that ever lived, Johnny D is the worst boy in town, E ought not to act in that way—such things we hear every day.

What do they all mean? What is a bad man? What is a good woman? Why ought one to act in any other way than as he likes?

The orthodox Catholic has a ready answer. Any one is good who obeys the commands of God as given through the infallible Church, and he will receive an everlasting reward in another life.

The orthodox Protestant has the same answer with the word Bible in place of the word Church.

Now either of these answers is very simple and complete if true. Whether they are true or not

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cannot be learned in the world and time we are now living in, but many are willing to accept them, without proof. If you are one of these, the rest of this booklet will not interest you. It is written for the working men and working women who are outside the church, perhaps because they do not wish to accept teachings that cannot be proved; perhaps because they feel that the church is something of, for and by the "upper" classes, and that it has no use for the wage-workers, nor they for it.

That this is the fact with nine-tenths of the Protestant churches in American cities to-day can hardly be denied. Their whole influence (and this is equally true of Catholic churches) is on the side of whatever will best serve to strengthen the rule of the capitalist class. The Catholic churches still retain a hold on the less thoughtful of the laboring class, being in this respect an interesting survival of the churches of the middle ages. The Protestant city churches have long since lost all but a few of their working-class members, and have developed a fitting servility in those they have kept.

The workers have left the churches, and think they have freed themselves from any control of the capitalist class over their consciences. But have they?

This brings us back to our first question: What is right, and what is the reason for doing that which we call right if it is not at the same time the pleasant thing to do?

It will help us to an answer if we look back to the beginnings of society, to a stage like that in which the Roman historians found our Germanic ancestors in the first century of the Christian era. There each man or woman was part of a group of people who carried on production or war, as the case might be, together. They had not learned how to produce millionaires or paupers. There was just one way for any member of the group to secure more comforts, and that was by helping to increase the wealth of the whole group.

Under such conditions no one would have been likely to say that the golden rule was all right in theory, but that it wouldn't work in practice, nor would the believers in the golden rule have assumed a sanctimonious air and comforted themselves with the hope of a reward in heaven. On the contrary, doing as one would be done by was the only sensible way to live. Each person's own interests were wholly bound up with the group to which he belonged. His relations to outsiders were far from ideal; he had not the least scruple against fighting them or plundering them whenever chance offered. But inside the group he had no desire to steal part of his neighbor's rations, since he knew that the neighbor would be likely in that case to take his own in turn. If two foolish young men came to blows their elders no doubt reminded them that their arms would be needed in the next fight with the neighboring tribe, and that it would not be a sensible thing to cripple each other. So on the

whole these ancestors of ours lived their lives without any doubts or fears or troubles over their moral system.

Their primitive communism, as it is called, continuing as it must have done through ages after ages, has left in the human mind an instinct for mutual helpfulness—an instinct that modern civilization has never quite succeeded in destroying.

The primitive communism itself was swept away by the forces of war. Tribe warred against tribe; the stronger absorbed the weaker; gradually nations were formed which carried on great wars against foreign nations. By and by the discovery was made that the conquerors could obtain less pleasure by killing their prisoners than by keeping them alive and taking away the products of their labor.

Here modern society begins. Equality has given place to mastery and slavery. Since then the forms have twice changed, but the principle has remained. The chattel slave has made way for the serf and the serf has been followed by the wage laborer. All this has not affected the position of the ruling class, living in luxury on the labor of the workers.

We have seen that under the primitive communism the interest of each individual was bound up with the interests of the whole society. But since slavery has begun the case has become entirely different. The interest of each person is still one

with that of his own class, but it has become exactly opposite to that of the other class.

It now becomes necessary for the ruling class to exercise control over its slaves and also to a large extent over its own members. In the case of the slaves it is important to keep them from revolt and to make them industrious. In the case of the masters they must be kept from quarrels among themselves which might encourage the slaves to revolt. They must also be kept from any special acts of wanton cruelty against their slaves which might drive them to revolt and desperation.

Note that there is an important difference between the restraint over the masters and that over the slaves. The masters are indeed kept from acting on their own natural impulses, but only for their own advantage in the long run. The slaves are not only kept from acting on their impulses, but also from acting in a way that would really be for their own advantage.

How has the ruling class established this control over its members and its slaves? In three ways—through religion, through public opinion, and through the law, with its judges and soldiers. The last method, though important, does not belong to our present subject. And space forbids our taking up a study of the religious and philosophical systems of the ancient world in their relations to morals. We pass on to the establishment of Christianity, and here we come to a remarkable paradox.

Jesus* most emphatically condemned the robbery of the poor by the rich. It was probably this which led to his crucifixion at the demand of the ruling classes of his own nation. The mass of the early converts were poor, many of them chattel slaves. The whole trend of the New Testament teachings is toward communism. How then could it be used as an engine of oppression?

The answer is found in the Christian doctrine of a future life. In the Jewish Bible, the Old Testament, this doctrine is wholly absent. In the reported sayings of Jesus there are traces of it here and there, many of them suspected of being late additions to the manuscripts. But in the epistles of Paul it appears unmistakably, and in the later Christian writings the future life grows to be the subject of chief concern. In an age of persecution the oppressed Christians comforted each other with dreams of a future state in which patient suffering should be rewarded with all conceivable delights. Borne up by this faith, the slaves and laborers forgot the idea of revolt, and applied themselves patiently to toil for their masters, looking for a glorious reward in heaven.

Early in the fourth century the Emperor Con-

*The present writer assumes the substantial correctness of the gospels as a report of the general tenor of Jesus' teaching. To those who choose to deny their historic character, it will suffice to point out that the paradox is no less worth study if the Christianity of the gospels be regarded as the thought of an age rather than of an individual.

stantine and the more sagacious members of the ruling class came to a realizing sense of this, and Christianity became the state religion. Ever since that time the ruling classes in the most civilized nations have zealously professed Christianity and have liberally supported it, while not until lately has it failed to give them good value for their money by keeping the minds of the working class on the things of another world.

Within the last twenty-five years the general acceptance of the evolution theory has weakened the popular faith in heaven and hell, and the shrewder minds of the capitalist class long ago perceived that some more efficient means must be employed to keep the workers in subjection. With their usual tact and promptness they redoubled their activity in molding for their own objects one of the strongest of all forces—PUBLIC OPINION.

It is not a pleasant fact, but a fact all the same, that most people, in the stage of growth we have thus far reached, do not like to do the hard thinking needed to form opinions of their own; they prefer to take their opinions ready made. Until lately they have taken their ideas of right and wrong from the church; since they have left the church they have given equal faith to the ideas which they find in their children's school books, in their newspapers, or floating around among their neighbors.

Here let us stop and try, in the light of what we have gone over, to get at the real meaning of the

words "moral" and "right." The dictionaries will not help us. They define "moral" as "right," "right" as "moral." and both of them as "according to the will of God." Now I believe that the more we examine the facts the more fully we shall be convinced of the truth of the following definition:

In any state of society, the commonly accepted idea of moral or right conduct is such conduct as tends to increase the happiness and well-being of the ruling class.

This is a very broad statement, and an abstract one. Let us test it by examples and see if we get results that seem true when we apply it.

In Germany, 100 A. D., all members of a group were equal, but they had no fellow feeling for outsiders. There a good man was one who risked his life fearlessly to bring victory for his group in war and spent his labor prodigally to secure comfort and plenty for his group in peace. The most immoral conduct was cowardice and shirking.

In Rome at the same date the ruling class consisted of wealthy land-owners, who were also slave-holders, and cultivated their vast estates by slave labor. A pre-eminently good man among the ruling class was one who treated his slaves kindly, so that they would not be tempted to rebel, and who studied and practiced the military art, so as to be of service to the state in suppressing any revolt of slaves or repelling any invasion of barbarians. Among the slaves, on the other hand, a good man

was one who was loyally obedient to his master without any regard to himself or his own class, and the worst criminal was one who stirred up his fellow-slaves to revolt.

Now let us look to feudal England in the fifteenth century. The ruling class was made up of soldier-barons who owned large tracts of land, cultivated by people who were free as to their persons, but were obliged to turn out and fight for their lord when needed and to make over to him a certain portion of their products each year. A good baron was one who was not too oppressive to his people, but left them enough of what they earned to enable them to grow in numbers and to furnish him with a large and devoted troop of soldiers on proper occasions. A good tenant was one who worked hard to increase the fertility of his lord's land, and went out cheerfully to fight, perhaps to be killed, whenever his lord thought it desirable.

Now let us take the United States in the closing year of the nineteenth century. The ruling class consists of the owners of the most wonderful wealth-producing machinery the world has ever seen. The subject class consists of the people who operate this machinery without owning it, and who receive for their labor a small fraction of the wealth which they produce. Here and now a good member of the ruling class is one who refrains from any unusually oppressive acts against his workmen that would incite to revolt, and who gives his surplus wealth freely to charitable societies

that keep the distress caused by the wage system from becoming dangerously acute, and to educational institutions that teach the righteousness of capitalism. A bad capitalist is one who foolishly treats his laborers in a way to make them rebel, or who makes a vulgar display of his wealth such as might excite discontent among those who would like to do the same thing, but cannot.

A good workingman in American to-day is one who puts the most intense energy into his work for his employer's benefit, refrains from the use of beverages that might make his labor less efficient, begets and cares for enough children to keep up the supply of future laborers, but not enough to make part of their maintenance fall on the taxpayers, and, last but not least, always votes for the political party of his employer. A bad workingman is one who shows any marked interest in higher wages or shorter hours; a "walking delegate," who aims to unite his fellows in a demand for better conditions, is only another name for a dangerous criminal; while a socialist, who dares to denounce the capitalist system, is, in the eyes of our ruling class and their dupes, a vile outcast, fit only for the gallows or the Gatling gun.

We shall presently come back to consider the reason for the strange fact that not only the capitalist but most other people in America accept these definitions of good and bad as applied to men of wealth and of poverty, but first let us apply our general definition of moral and right conduct

to the state of society that is coming when the working class has learned to unite, to act in its own behalf, and to control the means of production in the interest of all.

When that time comes the moral man will be the one who does faithfully his share of work for the common good. And under such conditions I believe it will be clear to any thoughtful person that morality will be the usual thing and immorality the rare exception.

"You can't change human nature," we are told by those who talk without thinking. Very true in the main; we must deal with human nature as it is. Let us examine briefly the natural impulses of this human nature of ours, and see what they will lead to under the conditions we are supposing. Most important of these impulses are the desires for good food, comfortable clothing and shelter, beauty of art and of nature, pleasant odors and pleasant sounds, social intercourse, friendship and love. Also to be considered is the natural impulse, which we may call laziness for lack of a better term, to expend no more energy than is necessary for the attainment of any given desire. Some claim that the desire for wealth is inborn and can never be uprooted, but a moment's examination will show this desire to be a compound of the simple desires I have named, taken in connection with the conditions of our present life under capitalism. For as society is now adjusted, he who gets wealth, no matter how, can gratify

most of these desires with little or no exertion, while the man without wealth can gratify but few of them with great exertion. But with private property in machinery and land abolished, and with production carried on in common for the common good, each member of society will be able to gratify nearly all of these desires by a few hours of social labor each day, while if he should try to shirk this labor he would find much more exertion necessary to satisfy even a few of his desires in any other way. Thus the same natural impulses which now lead men to plunder each other will under socialism lead them to help each other. Then for the first time the golden rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," will become a possible and natural way of living, instead of something to preach on Sundays and to explain away on week days.

But let us come back to America in the nineteenth century's ending. Why do the workingmen—most of them—accept the moral ideals which the capitalist class make for them? Why are we apparently so far behind Germany and France, not to speak of Belgium, in intelligence?

The means employed by the capitalists to impose false moral ideas on the people are the same in all countries—the church, the schools, the personal influence of capitalists and their professional hirelings, and especially books and newspapers. But in America they have the immense advantage of a

popular prejudice based on what a hundred years ago was a fact—a prejudice to the effect that in America, unlike Europe, there are no social classes, but that the poorest boy has an equal chance with the richest. The absurdity of this prejudice and the stupidity or bad faith of those who try to keep it alive are so clearly shown by Robert Blatchford in the booklet entitled "Imprudent Marriages" that I will not stop over it here. Fortunately it is being uprooted by the logic of events, a logic stronger than any argument.

As these words are being written, at the end of the year 1899, the people of the United States may be pretty accurately divided into five distinct classes:

1. The capitalist class, less than 2 per cent of the whole population, but already controlling all the great manufacturing industries, the department stories in the principal cities, and the transportation lines on which the farmers depend for a market and the laborers for their food.

2. The small mercantile and manufacturing class, about 8 per cent of the population, struggling under a load of debt and vainly trying to meet the competition of the large capitalists.

3. The farming class, about 30 per cent of the total, most of them paying either a heavy rent or its equivalent in interest on money, and taxed by the transportation companies to an extent that leaves them in most cases only the barest necessities of life in return for the hardest labor.

4. The professional class, doctors, lawyers, teachers, preachers, newspaper men, architects, etc., about .6 per cent of the population; formerly well supported by the patronage of the second class; now competing against each other for the sale of their services in a rapidly narrowing market.

5. The class of wage laborers on farms and cities, making up with their families about 55 per cent of the population, producing nearly all the wealth of the nation and receiving for their labor less than one-fourth of the annual product.

Now the events that are in progress involve the transfer of every important industry except possibly farming into the control of the first class and the consolidation of the other four classes into one. To-day a union of these four classes for common political action is impossible; the little business man fondly hopes to be a millionaire soon; the professional man is sure his exceptional talent will soon be rewarded as it deserves; the farmer imprecates the wrath of heaven and hell on the wicked socialist who would deprive him of his hard-earned farm, which is going to raise crops next year that will pay off that mortgage; the trade unionist has no use for a system that will put his skill on a level with the muscle of the common laborer; and the hod-carrier thanks heaven that he is getting enough to pay for his tobacco, and will cast his vote for more prosperity.

What is the use of urguing against such positive opinions? None at all, except for the few here and

there who are willing to open their eyes and to think. But the socialists look beyond to-day and see the inevitable outcome when trusts, liquid air, electricity and the superior efficiency of large production over small will have placed the lives and fortunes of all these four classes in the hands of the first class; when the people of the United States can no longer conceal from themselves the fact that they are living under an industrial despotism; when they see that individualism has become a dream of the past, and that the only hope for freedom is the abolition of classes and the founding of a co-operative commonwealth. All this the socialist sees in the near future and he has no fear as to what the choice of the people will be.

And now, lastly, in this great throbbing mass of life in which we must work, what is the moral thing, the right thing, for us to do, for us who hear the groans of slavery and who see the light of freedom just ahead? If we accept the moral standards that we find around us, we are riveting our own fetters. Let us then reject them once for all. In the better social order that is coming, that action will be right which is for the good of all. In the battle that is raging the right action for every worker and for every lover of justice is to do his full part, no matter at what temporary loss, to spread the light, to marshal the army, to shatter the last fortress of oppression and establish the reign of Liberty over the earth.

THE ODD TRICK.

By E. B. Bax.

We not infrequently hear a certain school of sentimentalists sneer at Socialism as holding before men a merely low sensuous ideal of existence—of good living, etc., etc. We are accused by such of neglecting the higher ideals of Humanity for the affairs of the stomach and of still more despised organs. The usual and obvious retort to this sort of thing is the *ad hominem* one, that the persons who make the charge are themselves sufficiently well cared for in these lower matters to be able to afford to ignore them and turn thir attention to things above. But though the gist of the matter is often contained in the above retort, it is, as it stands, crude, unformulated, and impolite, even if it were always applicable, which it is not. Let us therefore for the nonce treat these people seriously and develop the answer to their objection in formulated fashion. For in truth this objection springs not merely from deliberate hypocrisy or from thoughtlessness, but has its root in the ethical code in which they have been brought up. This ethical code teaches them that all the highest ideals of man's existence are attainable by a voluntary effort

on the part of the individual, irrespective of his material surroundings, which are matters of small concern. The body is in fact a thing rather to be ashamed of than anything else.

I would not say that all our sentimental friends carry their sentiment to this extent, but that this principle—the principle of Christian Dualism as opposed to Pagan Monism—underlies their moral consciousness there can be no doubt. It is of course true that this view is facilitated by comfortable bodily conditions. It is easier to think meanly of the "body" when the "body" is all right than when it is not. And this very fact gives us, as we shall know directly, the key to the Socialist position on the subject. There are, however, not a few persons who in all sincerity hold the view that in the overcoming of the body—in the minimization of all bodily satisfactions—is to be found the portal to the higher life of man, and who act up to their professions. Now it should be observed that to all who earnestly and sincerely accept the current ethical basis, the body still remains an end, although they profess to ignore it. It is an end to them just as much as to the epicure and the libertine, although in another way.

Now the difference between this orthodox and the Socialist way of viewing human life is, that the Socialist, while not pretending to ignore the body, yet wishes that it should cease to be the main end of human life. At present the satisfaction of personal bodily wants fills the mental horizon of the

immense majority of human beings, the only alternative being with those would-be virtuous individuals whose mental horizon is filled, to a large extent at least, with the idea of the suppression of these same bodily wants. That the first of these conditions is unfavorable to the development of a higher life, be it moral, intellectual, or artistic, few would dispute. That the second is scarcely less so is equally obvious on a little reflection. For in the first place the continued struggle against natural wants, to live on next to nothing, to bear the greatest privations, in itself draws off vast stores of moral energy which is wasted on mere suppression. But if the victory is gained, if the man does not succumb in the process, if his devotion to his higher aim, of whatever nature it may be, is so exceptionally great as to carry him through, what has he gained and what has he not lost? He is purified through suffering, says the Christian. But in how many cases he metaphorically leaves his skin behind in the process, in how many cases he has lost an essential part of himself, those know who have had much intercourse with or have studied the lives of the exceptional men who have successfully struggled with adversity, and who have observed the souredness, the one-sidedness, the twistedness, so to say, of character thence resulting. No one can fail to admire and to honor the strength of purpose which enables a man to pursue a high aim in the midst of privations; but no one who looks at the matter without preju-

dice and in the light of broad human interests, can honestly say that the man is better as man for the privations through which he is come, even though he has accomplished his life-work in spite of them. Instances of this may be found in Chatterton, Beethoven, etc. Of course we leave out of account here the fact that under modern economic conditions it is not a case of being contented with a little which is at least there, but of a desperate and exhausting life-struggle to obtain sufficient to sustain life at all. We do so, as we are addressing not so much the avowed opponents of Socialism as those who, while professing to sympathize in a manner with its aims, have lingering prejudices in favor of the ascetic or shall I say the "austere republican" theory of life, and who therefore view with disfavor the stress modern Socialism lays on the satisfaction of mere material wants.

Even the sentimental moralist in question must admit that at the present time the end-purpose of life is for the majority of men the satisfaction of natural personal wants. There are not a few, it is true, who pursue gain for the sake of gain, but this is generally after they have satisfied their animal wants. Now the apparent ideal of certain sentimental moralists I have heard talk, is an insurance against absolute destitution, and the rigid repression of all further desires over and above this minimum. The Positivists to a great extent hold this view. Such a state of things they think

might be attainable (by a kind of state-socialism we suppose) within the framework of present society. The theory, therefore, is not distasteful to those who see that capitalism is unstable and indeed impossible to last as at present constituted, but who would willingly stave off the complete overthrow of the system. The latter are anxious merely to retain their monopoly of the good things of life, but they find a useful ally in the introspective moralist who winces at the idea of removing the causes of moral evil for fear of depriving the individual of the opportunity of "resisting temptation," and who wants to keep him deprived of the comforts and conveniences of life that he may show his strength of mind in being able to do without them, shutting their eyes to the fact that they thereby perpetuate moral evil.

It is the scientific Socialist who alone seriously wishes to lead men to higher aims than merely sensual ones, while caring not one jot for the empty moral gymnastics which are the end of the introspective moralist. He sees that his ideal, human happiness, and that in the highest sense, is realizable rather in the enjoyment of all than in the restraint of each, even in the matter of mere material wants, and that the corrupting influence of luxury hitherto has mainly resided in the fact that it was not enjoyed by all. And his theory is based on knowledge of the "nature of things."

To the sick man what is the highest ideal? Health. His whole horizon of aspiration is filled

in with the notion of health. To him health is synonymous with happiness. He recovers his health and he finds now that there is something beyond that horizon—that over the mountains there are also oxen. Health now becomes a matter of course, which he accepts as such and does not think about; his mental horizon is now occupied with other objects. Had he remained sick he might have been resigned, but health would still have irresistibly presented itself to him as the ideal goal of life. So it is with the completion of health, which consists in the full, the adequate satisfaction of bodily wants. So long as they remain a desideratum for the majority of mankind, the majority of mankind will continue to regard them as the one end of life—notwithstanding the precept and example of the heroic ascetic, who despises such low concerns. Let the mass of men once have free access to the means of satisfaction, and they will then for the first time feel the need of higher objects in life.

As a matter of fact, it is a trite observation that all the "higher life" of the world has been carried on by those classes who have been free from the presence of material wants, not by those who have been deprived of them or who have renounced them. What did the really consistent Christian ascetics—the St. Anthonies of the fourth century, for example—accomplish beyond seeing visions, performing astounding feats of self-privation, etc.? Were they more than moral mountebanks? Do we not find, on the contrary, that the monks who really

were historians, philosophers, etc., spring from the wealthy Benedictines and other orders whose discipline was "lax," who kept a well-filled refectory, and whose morality was said to be questionable? led the intellectual life of the middle ages, who So long as monasticism remained ascetic, intellectual life within the monasteries was impossible. Bodily cravings and the struggle to repress those cravings occupied men's whole attention. Another and still more striking instance of how the fact of every possible sensual enjoyment being within reach forces the mind to seek satisfaction in something, which if it is not intellectual is at least non-sensual, is that of the tyrannos of the ancient city, or the wealthy noble, the provincial governor, the pro-consul or prefect of the Roman Empire. No one can adequately conceive nowadays of the luxury and sensuous pleasure in which such characters as these literally weltered—of the gorgeous marble palaces, of the Persian coverings, of the Babylonian couches, the wines, dishes, and spices from every quarter of the known world, of the most well-favored concubines that could be procured for money from Europe, from Asia and from Africa —yet, strange to say, the possessor and enjoyer of all these things was never happy unless risking them all and his life included on the barren chance (in the first instance mentioned) of conquering another city, or (in the second) of intriguing for the purple, the attainment of which experience had taught, in nine cases out of ten, meant death

within a few months. It was not that the conquest of the city or the ascent of the throne added to his luxury, which would have probably been impossible —this was not his object, but that having already his fill of all sensuous pleasures he looked for something more, and this something more he found, in accordance with the manners of his age, in the notion of glory, the glory of founding a dynasty, or of being saluted absolute master of the world. We see a similar thing nowadays in the tradesman in possession of all that wealth can purchase, and in absence of all intellectual resources, who, also in accordance with the manners of his age, finds his "something more" in commercial "success," which he continues to pursue for its own sake.

The introspective moralists, Christian, Positivist, or what not, are therefore right when they insist on the satisfaction of material wants not being regarded as the final end of human life. They are only wrong in not seeing that until obtained they must necessarily seem such to the vast majority of men. The signal failure in history of the doctrine of repression, whether it take the form of the "holiness" of the Christian, or the more plausible "ascetic discipline" of the Positivist, after a reign of two thousand years ought, one would think, to give these good people pause as to whether repression is, after all, so conducive to the higher life of man as satisfaction.

The true telos of human life, the "rational activity" of Aristotle, "the beautiful, the good, the true" of the young man who is taking to literary composition, may be compared, not to speak it profanely, to the odd trick in whist, which, though it is the object of the hand to win, yet presupposes the winning of six other tricks. Now the amateur of the "goody-goody" morality—the perfectionist of individual character—thinks to make the odd trick without having completed his regulation half-dozen. The Socialist is rather concerned that the human race as a whole should each and all "make" the first six tricks, called respectively, good and sufficient food and drink, good housing, good clothing, fuel, untaxed locomotion, adequate sexual satisfaction, knowing that before these are scored the "odd," which is the final purpose of the "deal," will be impossible. With bad and insufficient food, with small and squalid dwellings, with scanty and shoddy clothing, with insufficient firing in cold weather, with the lack of change, and with inadequate satisfaction of a sexual kind, man may exist; but he (i. e., the average man) will see nothing but these things in front of him, his ideal will still be them, and nothing else but them. When once he possesses them they become a part of his ordinary life, and he ceases to think about them. His horizon is then extended. He sees the final purpose of his life in things of which before he had never dreamed.

Once more, I repeat, let us make no mistake, all asceticism, all privation, is in itself an unmitigated evil. It is doubtless true that there are occasions when it is our duty, living in a period of struggle, to deprive ourselves, to sacrifice ourselves, for a better society. But even this deprivation, this sacrifice, is in itself an evil. It only becomes a good if it is undergone with the purpose of putting an end to the sempiternal privation and sacrifice which civilization imposes on the majority of our fellow-creatures. One can well appreciate the sacrifice of ourselves, the men of this generation, when necessary for the future, in all the respects named; but I confess that did I, like the Christians, the Positivists, and the sentimental Socialists, such as I understand Count Tolstoi to represent, believe privation and sacrifice (even "ascetic discipline"), be it in the most groveling of material matters, to be the permanent lot of Humanity, my ardor in the cause of progress would be considerably damped.

One can scarcely conceive the nobler life which will result from generations of satisfied (rather than repressed) animal desires, once they are the lot not of this or that class, but of all. With food, drink, and other creature comforts to be had for the asking, they will cease to occupy the attention of human beings to an extent previously unknown in the world's history. Then for the first time will the higher aspirations and faculties of man have free play, the "something more," the

"odd" trick, which is the real goal of human life, will assume a new character and be pursued with an energy rivaling that hitherto devoted to personal gain, ambition or glory, since the path to these things, at least in the old sense, will have been closed forever.

GERMS OF MIND IN PLANTS.

Translated from the German of R. H. France by A. M. Simons. Cloth, 50 cents.

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